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The Impact of Santri Participation in TPA Al-Fitroh Community Learning Programs: A Comparative Study of Ramadan and Non-Ramadan Periods

Pipit Pinangsih¹, Abdul Halim², Indah Febriana As'ari Putri³, Yasmin Amalia Fadhilah Ashari⁴

^{1,4}Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Dakwah Muhammad Natsir, Jawa Tengah, Indonesia

²Global and Public Law Department, University of New South Wales, Australia

³International Relations, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary

¹pipitpgh@gmail.com, ²abdul.halim@unsw.edu.au, ³asarin@student.elte.hu,

⁴yasminweru0@gmail.com

Abstract

Objective: This community engagement study aims to analyze the impact of *santri* participation in the community learning programs of TPA Al-Fitroh, Pabelan, Sukoharjo, by comparing participation patterns during the Ramadan and non-Ramadan periods. The study evaluates how Ramadan influences religious engagement, social interaction, and the development of Islamic character among *santri* while identifying strategies to sustain participation throughout the year. **Theoretical framework:** The research is grounded in the theory of social participation and Islamic education, which emphasizes that active involvement in community-based religious activities strengthens character formation, social responsibility, and the internalization of Islamic values. **Literature review:** Previous studies have demonstrated that Ramadan enhances religious practices and spiritual motivation among Muslim communities. Research has also highlighted the important role of Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an (TPA) as a community institution that promotes Qur'anic literacy, moral education, and social cohesion. **Method:** This study employed a qualitative approach using a comparative case study design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation of learning activities conducted during Ramadan and non-Ramadan periods. The participants included *santri*, teachers, parents, and TPA administrators. **Results:** The findings reveal that *santri* participation increased substantially during Ramadan due to stronger religious motivation, a supportive spiritual atmosphere, intensive Qur'anic learning sessions, and attractive community-based religious programs. Increased parental support and community involvement further strengthened attendance and engagement. Nevertheless, participation declined after Ramadan because routine activities lacked the same level of motivation and structured programs, indicating the need for sustainable community learning initiatives. **Implications:** The study suggests that TPA administrators should design continuous mentoring programs, strengthen collaboration with parents and community leaders, and integrate motivational religious activities into regular

learning schedules to maintain consistent participation beyond Ramadan. **Novelty:** The novelty of this study lies in its comparative examination of *santri* participation between Ramadan and non-Ramadan periods within a community engagement framework, demonstrating how seasonal religious enthusiasm can be transformed into sustainable educational participation through structured community learning strategies.

Keywords: santri participation, community engagement, tpa al-fitroh, ramadan, islamic education.

INTRODUCTION

Community-based Islamic education plays a strategic role in strengthening Qur'anic literacy, religious character, and social responsibility among children and adolescents. Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an (TPA) has become one of the most important community institutions for providing non-formal Islamic education while encouraging collaboration among teachers, parents, and local communities. During Ramadan, TPA activities generally become more intensive through additional Qur'anic recitation, Islamic studies, and social programs that increase the enthusiasm and participation of *santri*. However, maintaining this level of participation throughout the year remains a major challenge for many community learning centers [1].

Previous studies have primarily examined the influence of Ramadan on individual religiosity, worship practices, and moral behavior, while other research has focused on the educational role of TPA in improving Qur'anic learning and Islamic values. Nevertheless, limited attention has been given to comparing *santri* participation during Ramadan and non-Ramadan periods from a community engagement perspective. Furthermore, there is insufficient evidence explaining how community-based learning programs can sustain religious motivation beyond seasonal religious activities. This research gap highlights the need for practical community service initiatives that evaluate program effectiveness and identify sustainable participation strategies [1].

This community engagement project was conducted at TPA Al-Fitroh, Pabelan, Sukoharjo, to analyze the comparative impact of *santri* participation during Ramadan and non-Ramadan periods. The findings are expected to provide practical recommendations for TPA administrators, parents, and community leaders in developing continuous learning programs that strengthen Islamic character, increase community participation, and ensure the sustainability of Qur'anic education throughout the year [2].

It has been recognized that the Al-Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an (TPA) has an important role in shaping the Islamic character of the young generation of Muslims, especially in rural areas of Indonesia where the majority of the population adheres to Islam. This institution is not only a place to learn to read the Qur'an, but also serves as a center for moral development, the formation of social values, and the strengthening of religious identity among children and adolescents. The existence of landfills is very vital in the midst of the challenges of an increasingly complex era, especially in maintaining Islamic values in the midst of rapid modernization [2].

One of the important moments in the religious activities of Muslims is the month of Ramadan. This month is known as a month of increased worship, self-introspection, and higher religious fervor compared to other months. In the context of TPA activities, Ramadan is often the peak of student participation, characterized by an

increase in attendance, involvement in religious activities, and a higher spirit of learning. The distinctive spiritual atmosphere makes Ramadan a very conducive period for intensive development of Islamic character [3].

The Al-Fitroh Landfill, located in Pabelan Village, Sukoharjo Regency, is one example of a non-formal educational institution that actively organizes various religious activities, both routine and seasonal. In the month of Ramadan, TPA managers usually prepare special programs such as flash Islamic boarding schools, joint tadarus, and socio-religious activities that significantly increase student involvement. However, this high participation is often temporary and decreases drastically after the end of Ramadan [4].

This condition raises an important question: is the increase in student participation solely driven by the spiritual atmosphere of Ramadan, or are there other factors that encourage their participation? In addition, how is the sustainability of activities and the spirit of students after Ramadan? There have not been many studies that systematically compare the level of student participation between the month of Ramadan and non-Ramadan in the context of Islamic education at the community level. In fact, understanding these dynamics is important to formulate a more sustainable coaching strategy.

On the other hand, the majority of students at TPA Al-Fitroh come from a simple Muslim family background who make religious education a top priority in their children's lives [5]. TPA is the main learning space outside formal schools. Therefore, inconsistency in student participation, especially after Ramadan, can have an impact on the effectiveness of coaching and learning outcomes. This situation shows that religious and social motivation has a great influence on the activeness of students, but it has not been managed optimally to ensure the continuity of learning throughout the year [6].

This research is important to provide a clear picture of the extent to which the month of Ramadan affects the level of student participation in TPA, as well as how this trend changes outside the month of Ramadan. This analysis not only serves to determine the quantitative differences in participation, but also to explore qualitative aspects such as motivation, spiritual atmosphere, family support, and the role of teachers in maintaining the spirit of learning [7]. Thus, this research is expected to contribute to efforts to improve the quality of community-based Islamic education management.

From a theoretical perspective, this research refers to the theory of social participation and character education in Islam, which emphasizes the importance of the active involvement of individuals in religious activities as part of the process of moral formation [8]. In the context of Ramadan, this theory may explain why engagement increases and how strong spiritual values can be harnessed as the foundation of long-term coaching. On the other hand, the empirical approach in this study uses qualitative methods that allow in-depth data mining on behavior, motivation, and social dynamics that occur in landfills [9].

Practically, the results of this study are expected to be a reference for TPA managers, mosque administrators, and other da'wah and Islamic education institutions in designing coaching programs that are not only intensive in the month of Ramadan, but also continuous throughout the year [10]. Strategies based on empirical data will help design a more targeted approach, both in terms of learning content, teaching methods, and motivation systems that are relevant to local conditions [11].



Figure1. Learn the Basics and Basics of Al Fithroh Elementary School

The novelty of this study lies in a comparative approach that directly compares the participation of students between the months of Ramadan and non-Ramadan in a rural Muslim community. Thus, this research is not only relevant in the context of Islamic education, but also in the context of the social and spiritual development of the Muslim community. Through a data- and value-based approach, this research is expected to be able to make a real contribution in strengthening the sustainability of religious education in TPA and building a young generation that is not only ceremonially religious, but also has a strong and sustainable commitment to Islam in daily life [12].

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an (TPA) is a non-formal educational institution that has an important role in religious development and character formation of Muslim children and adolescents [13]. In various regions of Indonesia, especially rural areas, landfills are the center of spiritual activities that are integrated with people's lives. Through learning activities to read the Qur'an, strengthening faith, and habituating worship, TPA contributes to forming a young generation with Islamic morals. The existence of TPA not only has an impact on the cognitive aspect, but also touches the affective and social realms of students [14].

The participation of students in TPA activities is an important indicator of the effectiveness of the learning process and Islamic development. This participation is not limited to physical presence, but also includes emotional, spiritual, and social involvement in every activity [15]. In practice, student participation is influenced by various factors, including personal motivation, family support, teacher approach, and the environment in which the landfill operates. This level of participation is also highly dynamic, depending on the time, religious atmosphere, and type of activities offered [16].

The month of Ramadan in particular is a moment that has a great influence on increasing the participation of students in TPA activities. The distinctive spiritual atmosphere, high worship encouragement, and the existence of special programs such as flash boarding schools, joint tadarus, and socio-religious activities are the main attractions for the students. During Ramadan, increased participation is seen in the form of more consistent attendance, high enthusiasm for learning, and active involvement in various activities. This period created conditions conducive to the intensive internalization of Islamic values [17].

However, the phenomenon of increasing student participation during Ramadan is often temporary. After the month of Ramadan passes, the religious spirit of students tends to decrease. Landfill activities, which were previously crowded and lively, are again running on a more limited scale. This phenomenon indicates a tendency of seasonal religiosity, in which spiritual motivation increases sharply at a certain time, but does not continue consistently throughout the year. This is a big challenge for TPA managers in designing a coaching program that is able to maintain the sustainability of the spirit of students [18].

TPA as a community-based educational institution has great potential to foster sustainable religious spirit. With an innovative approach strategy, an adaptive curriculum, and strengthening the role of teachers and parents, the participation of students can be maintained throughout the year, not only during the momentum of Ramadan. It is also important to integrate religious learning and daily life, so that the values instilled in the TPA can continue to live in the behavior of students, even outside the TPA environment [19].

Table 1. Comparison of TPA Santri Participation in Ramadan and Non-Ramadan Activities

Types of Activities	Paksa Romadhan	Non-Ramadan
Average Daily Attendance	42 students	28 students
Tadarus Bersama	42 students	18 students
Congregational Prayer	30 students	10 students
Islamic Studies	42 students	28 students
Memorization Deposit	42 students	28 students
Writing the Qur'an	42 Scarlet Knight	28 students

In addition, social and cultural support also has a great influence on the sustainability of student participation. Communities that are active in religious and environmental activities that support moral development will strengthen TPA's position as a relevant and effective educational institution. Therefore, collaboration between landfill managers, community leaders, and parents is crucial in creating a climate that supports children's spiritual growth [20].

From these various understandings, it can be concluded that the participation of students in TPA activities is greatly influenced by the context of time and the spiritual conditions of the community. The month of Ramadan is a golden moment that encourages active engagement, but the sustainability of participation needs serious attention. This study is important to formulate a coaching strategy that not only relies on momentum, but is also oriented to the long-term process in shaping the Islamic character of students consistently [21].

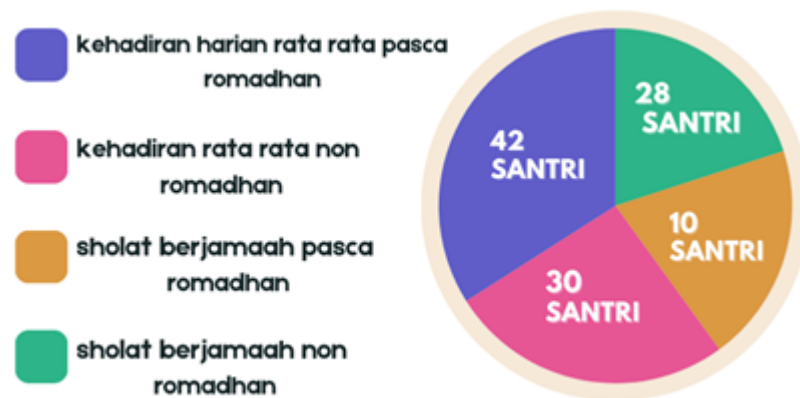


Figure 2. Comparison of Santri Attendance and Congregational Prayer Participation During Ramadan and Non-Ramadan Community Learning Activities

Figure 2 illustrates the comparison of *santri* participation in TPA Al-Fitroh community learning activities during the post-Ramadan and non-Ramadan periods. The highest proportion is represented by post-Ramadan attendance, involving 42 santri, indicating that many participants remained engaged immediately after the intensive Ramadan programs. Average attendance during non-Ramadan reached 30 santri, reflecting a moderate decline in participation. Meanwhile, congregational prayer participation was considerably lower, with 28 santri attending during the non-Ramadan period and only 10 santri during the post-Ramadan phase. These findings indicate that although learning attendance remains relatively stable, participation in supporting religious activities requires continuous motivation. Therefore, TPA managers should strengthen year-round mentoring and community-based religious programs to sustain active engagement beyond Ramadan.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative approach with a type of field research that aims to deeply understand the phenomenon of student participation in the activities of the Al-Fitroh Al-Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an (TPA), both in the month of Ramadan and outside the month of Ramadan (non-Ramadan). This approach was chosen to excavate data contextually and holistically through direct interaction with the research subjects in their natural environment [22].



Figure 3. Al-Fitroh Mosque Pabelan

The research was conducted at the Al-Fitroh Landfill located in Pabelan Village, Kartasura District, Sukoharjo Regency. This location was chosen purposively because it is one of the active landfills that has regular and seasonal programs, especially during the month of Ramadan, and has a relatively stable number of students from various age levels. The research subjects consisted of active TPA students (ages 6–15 years), teachers, and TPA managers. Purposive sampling techniques are used to determine key informants who are considered to be able to provide the most relevant and in-depth information about the dynamics of student participation [23].

Data collection techniques are carried out through: In-depth interviews: Conducted with students, teachers, and TPA managers to understand perceptions, motivations, and factors that affect participation in TPA activities. Participatory observation: The researcher directly observed the activities of students in two different periods, namely during the month of Ramadan and the non-Ramadan month, to identify changes in the level of participation and the type of activities followed. Documentation: Additional data were collected through records of TPA activities, program schedules, and student attendance as a complement to observation data [24].

The data obtained was analyzed using qualitative descriptive analysis techniques, which included data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. This process is carried out continuously during and after data collection, to gain a complete understanding of the differences in student participation at two different times. This qualitative approach allows researchers to capture non-formal aspects, such as spiritual atmosphere, religious spirit, environmental support, and social dynamics that affect student participation. Thus, this study is expected to be able to provide a comprehensive picture of the impact of student participation in coaching [25].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this research were obtained through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation of student activities at the Al-Fitroh Pabelan Landfill in two different time periods, namely the month of Ramadan and the ordinary months (non-Ramadan). The main findings show that there is a significant difference in the level of student participation between the two periods, both quantitatively and qualitatively [26].

Increased Participation in the Month of Ramadan: During the month of Ramadan, participation

Students experienced a significant surge. The average number of students who attend every day increases from around 30-35 people in ordinary months to around 40-50 people during Ramadan. Activities such as joint tadarus, congregational prayers, flash Islamic boarding schools, and Islamic studies have increased the enthusiasm and attendance of students [27]. Interviews with managers and teachers show that the typical spiritual atmosphere in the month of Ramadan, encouragement from parents, and special programs that are only carried out during the month are the main driving factors for the increase in student participation [28].

Variety of Interesting Ramadan Activities: Programs during Ramadan such as group tadarus, takjil distribution, and Islamic competitions have proven to be very attractive to students. Many of them stated that these activities made them more enthusiastic to attend and study at the TPA. In addition, the giving of simple prizes or awards for students who are diligent in attending and active in activities is an additional motivating factor [29].

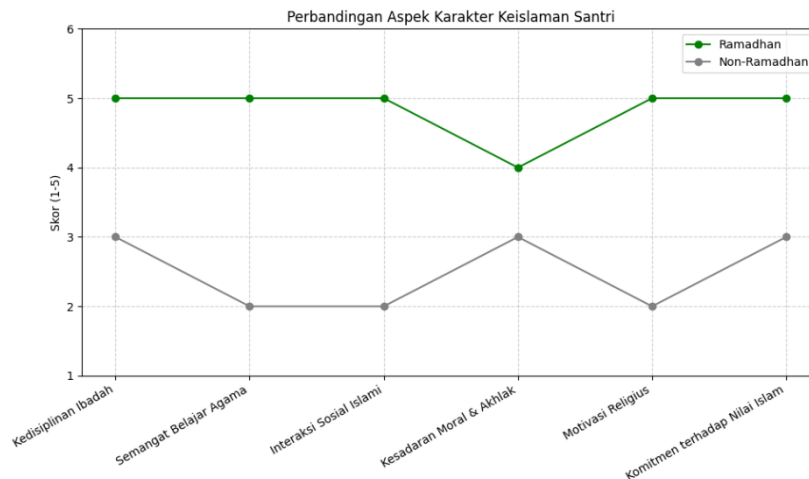


Figure 4. Comparison of Islamic Character Development Among Santri During Ramadan and Non-Ramadan Community Learning Programs at TPA Al-Fitroh

Figure 4 presents a comparison of six Islamic character indicators among santri during Ramadan and non-Ramadan learning programs at TPA Al-Fitroh. During Ramadan, almost all indicators reached the highest score of 5, except awareness of worship and morals, which scored 4, indicating consistently strong religious character development. In contrast, the non-Ramadan period showed lower scores ranging from 2 to 3, reflecting reduced enthusiasm and consistency in practicing Islamic values. The largest differences appeared in religious motivation, social interaction, and commitment to Islamic values. These findings demonstrate that the spiritual environment and intensive activities during Ramadan significantly strengthen character formation. Consequently, sustainable community-based educational programs are essential to maintain these positive character outcomes throughout the entire year.

Decrease in Post-Ramadan Participation: Observational data shows that after the month of Ramadan ends, student participation decreases. The average attendance dropped again to 30–35 people, with the intensity of activities more limited to the routine of reading Iqra or the Qur'an. Interviews show that after Ramadan, the motivational atmosphere of the family environment of Supporting and Inhibiting Factors and society also decreases. In addition, the daily activities of students who return to formal school or play are also a factor in reducing attendance [30].

Participation; Supporting factors for student participation include: a strong religious atmosphere during Ramadan, family support, interesting and varied activities, and the active role of teachers in motivating students. Meanwhile, post-Ramadan inhibiting factors include the lack of innovation in activities outside of Ramadan, weak motivation systems [31]. **Landfill Manager Response:** Landfill managers realize that this phenomenon is seasonal and there is a need for a more sustainable coaching strategy. They expressed the need for more creative and consistent post-Ramadan activity planning so that the religious spirit that grows during Ramadan does not simply disappear after the holy month has passed .

Table 2. The Impact of Santri Participation on the Formation of Islamic Character (Ramadan vs Non-Ramadan)

Aspects of Islamic Character	During Ramadan	Non-Ramadan
Discipline of Worship	Increase; Students are more consistent in participating in congregational prayers and tadarus	Lack of consistency; Only some students actively participate in congregational worship
The Spirit of Learning Religion	Very high; Encouraged by the spiritual atmosphere and intensive programs	Decline; Routines return to normal and motivation to learn tends to stagnate
Islamic Social Interaction	Height; Through joint activities such as iftar and Islamic boarding schools	Limited; fewer joint activities and only at certain moments
Moral and Moral Awareness	Increase; Many activities encourage self-introspection and good deeds	Stable; depending on the teacher's approach and family support
Religious Motivation	Strengthening; The atmosphere of Ramadan encourages the personal spirituality of the saints	Weakening; There is no special moment that triggers a collective spiritual impulse
Commitment to Islamic Values	More visible; students are more obedient to Islamic norms and values	Variatory; environmental influence and intensity of supervision are more dominant

Discussion

The results of the study show that the level of student participation in TPA Al-Fitroh activities has increased significantly during the month of Ramadan compared to ordinary months. These findings reinforce the view that Ramadan has strong spiritual value in shaping religious behavior and encouraging children's involvement in religious activities. This increase in participation does not only occur in quantitative aspects, such as the number of attendance, but also qualitatively, namely the spirit of learning, discipline, and emotional involvement in TPA activities [33].



Figure 5. A Study On The Morals And Manners Of The Children Of Tpa Al Fitroh Pabelan

The increase is in line with social participation theory, which states that individual involvement in the community is strongly influenced by social and cultural contexts. In this case, Ramadan creates a collective atmosphere that encourages individuals—including children—to be more active in religious activities as part of their social identity. TPA as a non-formal learning space also takes a strategic role in facilitating this religious spirit. In addition, Ramadan-specific programs such as joint tadarus, joint tarawih prayers, and socio-religious activities contribute greatly to the increase in student participation [34]. The diversity of this activity is able to attract the interest of students from various age levels. In the interview, the students stated that they were more enthusiastic about participating in the activity because the atmosphere was different from ordinary days. This shows that creativity in designing programs is very important in maintaining student involvement [35].

However, this condition is temporary. After the month of Ramadan ended, the participation rate of students decreased drastically again. This phenomenon shows that the motivation of students tends to be seasonal and has not been built consistently throughout the year. Their engagement is driven more by the euphoria and spiritual environment of Ramadan, rather than by ongoing personal awareness and commitment. The decline in participation post-Ramadan is an indicator of weaknesses in the coaching system that is not sustainable [36].

In the context of Islamic character education, the formation of religious attitudes should ideally be a long-term, consistent process, not just an intensive one for a certain time. Without a structured follow-up strategy, increased participation during Ramadan will not have a long-term impact on the character of students. These findings indicate the need for improvement in terms of landfill activity management. The limited variety of programs outside of Ramadan, the lack of a sustainable motivation system, and the weak involvement of parents in guiding their children contribute to the decline in student morale. Therefore, TPA managers must start designing more holistic and sustainable approaches, such as weekly thematic coaching, daily religious assignments, and strengthening emotional relationships between teachers and students [37].

From the point of view of Islamic education, the process of internalizing religious values must be carried out consistently in order to form an inherent Islamic character and not be easily influenced by fluctuations in the worship season. In this case, TPA needs to play the role of an agent of social change that functions not only during Ramadan, but also throughout the year. This can be realized through a more inclusive community approach, such as involving community leaders, parents, and mosque institutions in coaching activities.

Another advantage of this study is its approach that compares two different time situations, namely Ramadan and non-Ramadan, so as to provide a complete picture of the dynamics of student participation. However, there are still limitations, such as the lack of long-term measurement of the sustainability impact of post-Ramadan activities. In the future, further research can be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the annual coaching program and its effect on significant changes in the character of students [38]. Thus, this discussion emphasizes that Ramadan can be a positive momentum in fostering the Islamic character of students, but the effect needs to be strengthened with a continuous program. TPA has great potential to become a center for the transformation of Islamic values if it is able to use the moment of Ramadan as a starting point, not as a temporary peak of religious fervor.

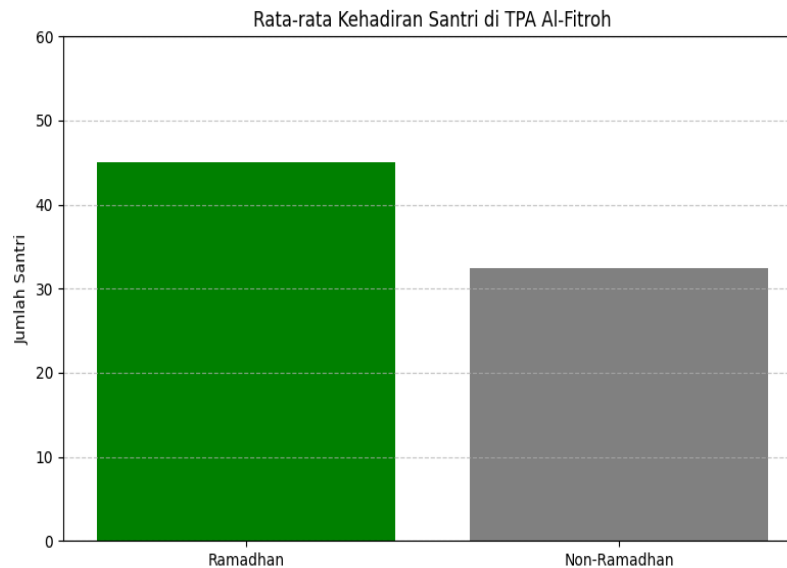


Figure 6. Comparison of Average Santri Attendance During Ramadan and Non-Ramadan Community Learning Activities at TPA Al-Fitroh Pabelan Sukoharjo

Figure 6 compares the average attendance of *santri* participating in community learning activities at TPA Al-Fitroh during Ramadan and non-Ramadan periods. The data show that average attendance during Ramadan reached approximately 45 santri, whereas attendance during the non-Ramadan period declined to around 32 santri. This difference indicates that the spiritual atmosphere, intensive religious programs, and stronger community support during Ramadan significantly encourage consistent participation in Qur'anic learning activities. Conversely, attendance decreases during regular months due to reduced program intensity and lower motivational factors. These findings emphasize the importance of developing sustainable community engagement strategies, continuous mentoring, parental involvement, and innovative educational activities to maintain high attendance and active participation throughout the entire year.

Analysis

This study comparatively discusses the impact of student participation in Al-Fitroh Pabelan TPA activities in two different periods: Ramadan and non-Ramadan. The author uses a qualitative approach with data collection techniques in the form of interviews, observations, and documentation to reveal phenomena that occur in depth and holistically. The results of the study show that there is a significant increase in student participation during the month of Ramadan. A strong spiritual atmosphere, interesting programs such as Islamic boarding schools and joint tadarus, and encouragement from family are the dominant factors that encourage the presence and involvement of students [39].

However, the increase is seasonal. After Ramadan, enthusiasm dropped sharply. This shows that the religious motivation of the students is still external and has not been deeply internalized. This decline highlights the weak sustainable coaching system at landfills, as well as the lack of a consistent motivational strategy. In fact, Islamic character education requires a long-term process and continuity of values. This research highlights the importance of a more holistic approach from TPA managers, such as post-Ramadan thematic programs, parental involvement, and the integration of Islamic values in the daily lives of students. A community-based

approach is also recommended to strengthen collaboration between landfills, mosques, and communities.

The advantage of this research lies in its approach that compares two time contexts, thus providing a real picture of the dynamics of student participation. The author also succeeded in presenting quantitative and qualitative data in a balanced manner. However, the limitation lies in the absence of longitudinal evaluation of the sustainability of the character of students after the program intervention. Overall, this study makes an important contribution to the development of community-based Islamic education, and suggests that Ramadan should be used as a starting point rather than just the peak in the development of the Islamic character of students [40].

CONCLUSION

The community learning programs implemented at TPA Al-Fitroh demonstrate a significant contribution to strengthening santri participation, Islamic character development, and community engagement. The comparative findings indicate that santri participation is substantially higher during the Ramadan period than during non-Ramadan months. This increase is influenced by a stronger spiritual atmosphere, intensive Qur'anic learning activities, greater parental involvement, and various community-based religious programs that encourage active participation. These conditions create a supportive environment that enhances religious commitment while fostering social responsibility and collaborative learning among santri. Despite these positive outcomes, the study also reveals that participation tends to decline after Ramadan because the intensity of community activities and motivational programs decreases. This finding suggests that the benefits of Ramadan-based learning cannot be sustained without continuous educational initiatives and structured community engagement. Therefore, maintaining consistent participation requires year-round mentoring, regular religious enrichment activities, and stronger collaboration among TPA administrators, parents, local religious leaders, and community organizations. Such collaboration is essential to transform seasonal religious enthusiasm into sustainable educational practices that continuously reinforce Islamic values and community participation. From a community engagement perspective, this study demonstrates that TPA Al-Fitroh functions not only as a Qur'anic learning center but also as a community institution that promotes social cohesion, moral education, and character development. The findings provide practical guidance for designing sustainable community learning programs that integrate spiritual development with active community participation. The novelty of this study lies in presenting a comparative analysis of santri participation during Ramadan and non-Ramadan periods within a community engagement framework, offering an evidence-based model for strengthening community-based Islamic education. This model may serve as a valuable reference for other TPA institutions and community organizations seeking to improve the sustainability, effectiveness, and social impact of Islamic educational programs beyond the Ramadan season.

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Author Contribution

All authors contributed substantially to the conception, design, implementation, data collection, analysis, interpretation, manuscript preparation, critical revision, and final approval of the published version. Each author accepts responsibility for the accuracy, integrity, and academic quality of the research and its reported findings.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no competing financial, professional, institutional, or personal interests that could have influenced the research process or the interpretation of the findings. All aspects of the study were conducted objectively, ethically, independently, and in accordance with academic integrity principles.

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